

Establishing Roots

Recommendations for Land Trusts' Role in Community Forestry

Author:

Betsy Cook

Advisor:

Dr. Dean Urban



Irvin Learning Farm, Triangle Land Conservancy

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Abstract

Community forests ensure that community members actively participate in land management decisions and have secure access to economic and non-economic benefits of forestland. The community forest movement in the United States has been growing for the past thirty years. Currently, only a small handful of land trusts are deeply involved in the movement. There may be opportunity for this to change as land trusts are looking to employ new, innovative, community based tools of land conservation. Community forests could act as one of these new conservation tools. Through case studies and semi-structured interviews this study analyzes the current state of land trusts' involvement in community forestry. Through formal surveys, this study then assesses land trust professionals and community member's perspectives on the role land trusts should play in future community forest projects. Interviews and surveys were analyzed with NVivo 10 software.

Case study analysis shows that community forests range in size from 62 to 27,080 acres and the majority are located in the Northeast. Results of the survey show that both land trust professionals and community members are interested in pursuing community forest projects. These two groups would most like to see land trusts facilitate land transactions for municipalities looking to acquire and manage community forests. Land trust professionals and community members disagreed on the other roles land trusts should play in community forest projects. Land trust practitioners identified funding and staff capacity as the biggest challenges to land trusts involvement in community forestry. Land trust practitioners identified an increase in the number of people connected to land and an increase in the amount of land conserved as the biggest successes. The majority of land trust practitioners and community members agreed they would like communities to receive both recreational and economic benefits from sustainable forestry on a potential community forest. This study has implications for land trusts future involvement in community forestry and thus recommendations are given to Triangle Land Conservancy, a local North Carolina land trust.

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1. Introduction

Land trusts have historically conserved land through two main tools: fee simple acquisition of properties and acquisition of conservation easements. Recent factors including a decrease in traditional sources of funding and a renewed interest in community based conservation have led land trusts to explore new methods of land conservation. One of these methods is community forestry.

The term community forest has been used to describe a huge variety of land projects in many different continents. For clarity, this study uses the following model created by the Community Forest Collaborative (CFC)¹ to describe a community forest project.

“The Community Forest model secures access and rights to the forest resource at the community level; it promotes community participation in management decisions; it ensures that communities receive value and benefits from the land that can support and reinforce community priorities and economic development objectives; and it secures permanent protection of the conservation values of the forestland.” (Lyman 2007)

The model points to four key elements of a community forest project:

“(1) Community forests are owned and managed by a municipal entity or by another group (e.g. land trust) on behalf of a community.

(2) The proposed acquisition and management structure ensures community participation in and responsibility for management decisions.

(3) The community has secure access to the value and benefits of the forest, both monetary and nonmonetary, that can support and reinforce community priorities and economic development objectives.

(4) The conservation values of the forestland are permanently protected.” (Lyman 2007)

The two distinguishing elements of a community forest are community participation in land management decisions and secure community access to benefits of the forest (Christofferson et al. 2008). Benefits do not necessarily need to be economic benefits from timber harvests; they can come from recreation, ecosystem services, or education. However, it is essential that the community decides on the primary benefits it would like access to and then manages the forestland to achieve those benefits. Often, management decisions are made through an elected or appointed committee comprised of community members.

Community forests can be strong conservation tools as they provide ecological, economic, and social benefits to natural and human communities. Existing community forests have conserved ecologically valuable forestland, restored ecosystems, and strengthened individual and

¹The Community Forest Collaborative is a group comprised of The Trust for Public Land, the Northern Forest center, and the Quebec-Labrador Foundation/Atlantic Center for the Environment. Its goal is to “marshal resources to expand the community ownership and management of forestland.”

community connections to land (Christofferson et al. 2008). A stronger connection to the land as a result of a sense of ownership can create a community of reliable, long term land stewards. As Wily and Mbaya (2001) suggest, people who live close to forests are most dependent on them and will therefore manage the land more sustainably as they have a greatest vested interest in the forest.

1.1 History of Community Forests

In the United States, the tradition of formalized community forestry extends into the early seventeenth century. New England settlements held common land to benefit all inhabitants and often timber rights were granted to inhabitants. The management use of this communal land varied throughout the next few centuries but in many cases original common land is still owned by towns in New England (McCullough 1995).

There is an even stronger international history of community forestry. Nepal, The Philippines, India, Mexico and countries in Asia and Latin America all have century long histories of communally owned forestland. For example, in Mexico 60-80% of forestland is within common property (Klooster 2003) and the majority of timber production comes from community forests (Charnley and Poe 2007).

The contemporary community forestry movement took root internationally between the 1970s and 1990s due to concerns about deforestation and degradation. Additionally, community pressure on governments to address social inequality issues led to an increase in bottom-up approaches to land management like community forests (Charnley and Poe 2007).

This international movement spread to the United States where the contemporary community forest movement took root in the early 1990s. Community forestry in the United States was primarily in response to heated land use disagreements in the Western United States between the federal government and local communities. At the time, it was seen as a way to create more local control over land management (Christofferson et al. 2008). Since then the concept has spread to different regions. Today, the Northeast is a hot spot for community forests likely due to the history of communal land ownership (Julie Renaud Evans, personal communication, February 20, 2014).

Community forest projects can look very different depending on location. In the western US, community forestry is focused on communal management of public lands due to the vast quantity of public lands in the West and the previously mentioned conflicts in the 1980s over land management. In the Northeast and Southeast, where most land is privately owned, community forest projects are focused on land conservation in response to threats of urbanization, forest fragmentation, new ecosystem service markets, and a desire to assist and educate forestland owners (Christofferson 2008). As community forestry crosses a range of

scales, locations, organizations, and sectors this study will focus on the community forest model seen primarily in the eastern United States.

1.2 The Changing Forest Landscape in the United States

Community forestry may become a prominent conservation tool for reasons beyond just increasing interest. In the United States, especially in the Southeast, forestland is changing hands at a rapid rate. Over the past decade, industrial forest companies have sold or transferred most of their timberland to timber investment management organizations (TIMOs) or real estate investment trusts (REITs). REITs and TIMOs now dominate forestland ownership in the southeast (Figure 1). These investment groups operate under a model where they sell timberland every twelve to fifteen years. As a result – ownership is unstable and forestland can become extremely fragmented (Wear and Greis 2013).

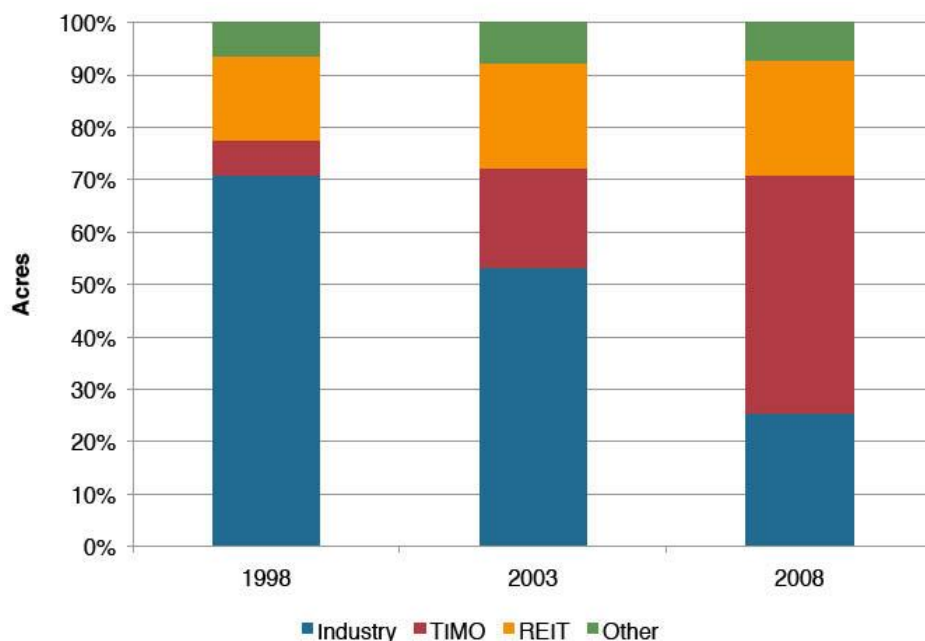


Figure 1. Proportion of corporate forest ownership in the United States by subgroup, 1998, 2003, and 2008 (Wear and Greis 2013)

Since 1978, 20-25% of all privately owned forestland in the US has changed ownership. Since 1996 approximately half of industry owned forestland has changed ownership (Little 2005). It is predicted that in the next ten years, 20% of private forestland could be sold (Block and Sample, 2001). Figure 2 demonstrates the annual area of timberland transactions in the United States.

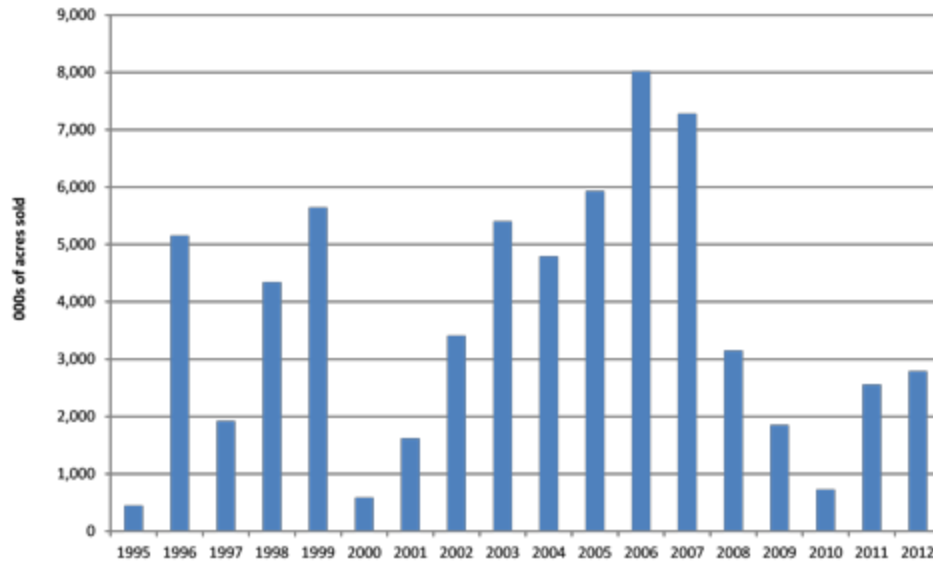


Figure 2. Annual area of US timberland transactions (The Campbell Group)

Additionally, in the 1990s, conversion of forestland to development reached 1 million acres per year. It is projected that in the next 20 years another 11% of private forestland will experience dramatic increases in housing development (Stein et al. 2005).

Forestland conversion to development, unstable ownership and the sale of large forest tracts all make community forestry a timely conservation tool. Community forests could keep forestland economically and environmentally sustainable while benefiting local communities.

1.3 Potential Role of Land Trusts in Community Forests

There is great opportunity for land trusts to become involved in community forestry. The broader land trust community is increasingly interested in having deep relationships with communities. A recent report published by the Land Trust Alliance entitled *Land Conservation and the Public Interest: The case for Community Conservation* discusses a “current push towards re-innovation in Land Trust Community to focus on ‘Community Conservation’” (Atencio et al. 2013). The report argues that in the past 30 years the land trust movement has had great *transactional strength* (meaning strength in acquiring land and easements) and that land trust leaders believe this strength needs to be matched with *relational strength* (meaning strength in relationships with communities and becoming essential community institutions).

Additionally, it has been observed that the most successful community forest projects have had two pivotal components, targeted investments and the existence of “intermediary

organizations” that provide support and assistance to communities (Christoffersen et al. 2008). Amongst other roles, most land trusts have the expertise and capacity to act as an “intermediary organization” for communities trying to establish community forests.

The Community Forest Collaborative conducted an in-depth inventory and identifies current gaps in community forestry that land trusts may be able to assist with. The gaps fall into six categories.

1. Community capacity building
 2. Acquisition and financing
 3. Economic development
 4. Conservation planning
 5. Stewardship
 6. Funding
- (Lyman et al. 2011)

Based off of these gaps, The Community Forest Collaborative provides the following recommendations for land trusts to become more involved in community forestry.

- 1. Coordinate capacities among public and private institutions promoting interdisciplinary collaborations between conservation, forestry, planning, community and economic development organizations.*
- 2. Engage conservation organizations and land trusts – work with private landowners to consider donations of forestland to communities. Encourage local and regional land trusts to provide communities with expertise in land acquisition and stewardship.*

Land trusts and conservation organizations have the skills, access to land, access to funding, and management expertise to be essential player in the community forestry movement.

1.4 Objectives

The goal of this study is to provide land trusts, community forestry practitioners, and community members with a greater understanding of the current role land trusts play in community forestry and to provide recommendations for how land trusts could be involved in future community forest projects. The study also acts to provide specific recommendations for Triangle Land Conservancy, a non-profit land trust operating in the Triangle Region of North Carolina. The three key objectives of the study are:

1. Identify the current roles land trusts play in community forestry.
2. Assess the opinions of North Carolina land trusts and community members regarding land trusts' involvement in community forestry.
3. Develop recommendations for Triangle Land Conservancy's involvement in community forestry.

2. Methods

Four tools of analysis were used to achieve the above objectives (Figure 3). Two tools, case studies and practitioner interviews, were used to assess the current state of community forestry. Two other tools, a survey of land trust practitioners and a survey of Triangle Land Conservancy community members, were used to assess future interest in community forestry.

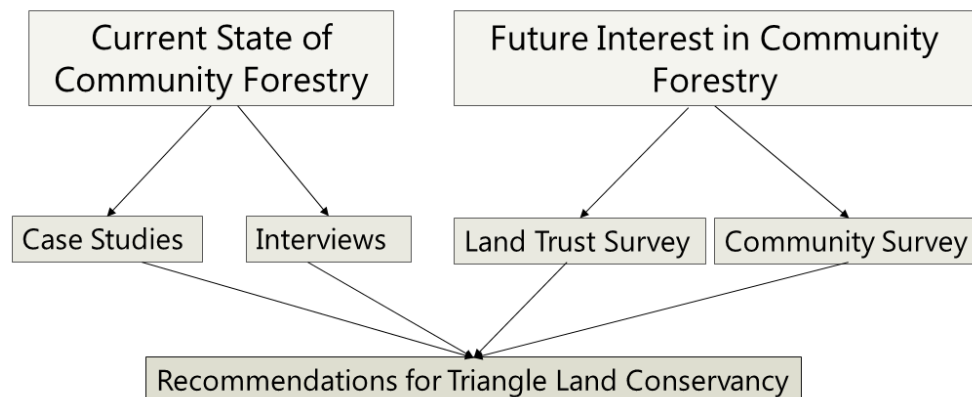


Figure 3. Methods to study land trusts involvement in community forestry

2.1 Current State of Community Forestry

To develop recommendations for land trust's involvement in community forestry it was necessary to assess the ways land trusts and other non-profit organization are currently involved in community forestry.

2.1.1 Case Studies

Case studies of projects were completed to assess the current state of community forestry. The following sources were used to identify the current community forest projects in the United

States: (1) United States Forest Service Community Forest Program ² (2) the Trust for Public Land ³ (3) the Northern Forest Center ⁴ (4) discussions with community forest practitioners (5) blind internet search. A list of 32 projects was assembled. This list attempted to capture all of the community forest projects in the United States; although the list may be missing projects it is likely representative of all the projects in the United States.

The projects were then analyzed for the following qualities: (1) size, (2) location (3), ownership entity, and (4) the role a land trust played in the project, if any. A detailed narrative of one the identified projects was then created to provide a more detailed look at the role land trusts can play.

2.1.2 Practitioner Interviews

Based off of the case studies, it was found that four community forest projects are owned and managed by land trusts. Practitioners that either played a role in creating or that currently manage these 4 projects were interviewed. An additional practitioner, Monica McCann, who facilitated the acquisition of a community forest in North Carolina, was also interviewed. Interviews were conducted over the phone and lasted anywhere from thirty minutes to an hour and a half. Appendix A contains the transcript used for the interviews. Most interviews strayed from this transcript and it should be viewed as a loose outline. Table 1 outlines the practitioners interviewed.

Practitioner	Organization
Mark Berry	Downeast Lakes Land Trust
Rebecca Brown	Ammonosuc Conservation Trust
Anonymous Interviewee	A Northeastern conservation organization
Monica McCann	Resourceful Communities
Kate Wanner	Trust for Public Land

Table 1. Community forest practitioners interviewed

The interviews were analyzed using NVivo 10 software (NVivo qualitative data analysis software; QSR International Pty, Ltd. Version 10, 2012). Codes were created in an open coding process based on themes that emerged from the interview. The NVivo analysis was primarily used to find common themes in response to questions about the biggest challenges and successes the practitioners experienced with their community forest projects.

² <http://www.fs.fed.us/spf/coop/programs/loa/cfp.shtml>

³ <http://www.tpl.org/our-work/our-land-and-water/working-lands/community-forests>

⁴ http://www.northernforest.org/Community_Forest_Collaborative.html

2.2 Future Interest in Community Forestry

2.2.1 Survey of North Carolina Land Trusts

To assess land trust's opinions of land trust involvement in community forestry a survey was distributed to the 23 land trusts operating in North Carolina. Staff members from 19 of the 23 land trusts responded to the survey. The survey was analyzed in NVivo and Excel. A copy of the survey can be found in Appendix B.

2.2.2 Survey of Triangle Land Conservancy Community Members

A survey was distributed through the Triangle Land Conservancy e-mail list to assess the opinions of TLC's members and stakeholders in land trusts' involvement in community forestry. There were 31 respondents to the survey. The responses were analyzed in NVivo and Excel. A copy of the survey can be found in Appendix C.

3. Results

3.1 Current State of Community Forestry

3.1.1 Case Studies

The 32 community forest projects were located in ten different states, ranged in size from 62 acres to 27,080 acres and were primarily owned by four different types of entities (Table 2).

Project Name	Acres	State	Ownership Entity
Mount Ascension	62	MT	Municipality
Hall Mountain	108	NC	Tribal
Foy's Community Forest	170	MT	Municipality
Sprucewood Forest	176	NH	Municipality
Cady Hill Forest	258	VT	Municipality
Hinseburg Town Forest	301	VT	Municipality
LaPlatte River Headwaters	301	VT	Municipality
Albany Town Forest	310	NH	Municipality
Pilgrim Community Forest	320	MI	Private
Indian Creek Community Forest	350	WA	Tribal
Little Hogback Community Forest	370	VT	Private

Barre Town Forest	384	VT	Municipality
Lincoln Community Forest	396	WI	Nonprofit
Middlesex Town Forest	403	VT	Municipality
Canaan Community Forest	424	VT	Municipality
North Kitsap Heritage Park	470	WA	Municipality
Blackstrap Hill Community Forest	520	ME	Nonprofit & Municipality
Hoke County Community Forest	532	NC	Municipality
Page Pond Community Forest	567	NH	Municipality
Virginia Stranahan Town Forest	622	VT	Municipality
Cooley-Jericho Community Forest	843	NH	Nonprofit
Strafford Community Forest	868	NH	Municipality
Machias River Community Forest	925	ME	Municipality
Lemington Community Forest	1471	VT	Municipality
Nine Times Community Forest	1648	SC	Nonprofit
Arcata City Forest	2100	CA	Municipality
Brushwood Community Forest	3400	VT	Municipalities
Paul T. Doherty Memorial Forest	4900	NH	Municipality
Amherst Mountains Community Forest	4974	ME	Municipality
13 Mile Woods Community Forest	7108	NH	Nonprofit
Randolph Community Forest	10,000	NH	Municipality
Farm Cove Community Forest	27,080	ME	Nonprofit

Table 2. Community forest projects examined in case study analysis

Half of the community forests are less than 500 acres, 23 of the 32 projects are less than 1,000 acres, 6 of the projects are between 1,000 and 5,000 and only 3 are above 5,000 acres. The largest project is above 20,000 acres (Figure 4).

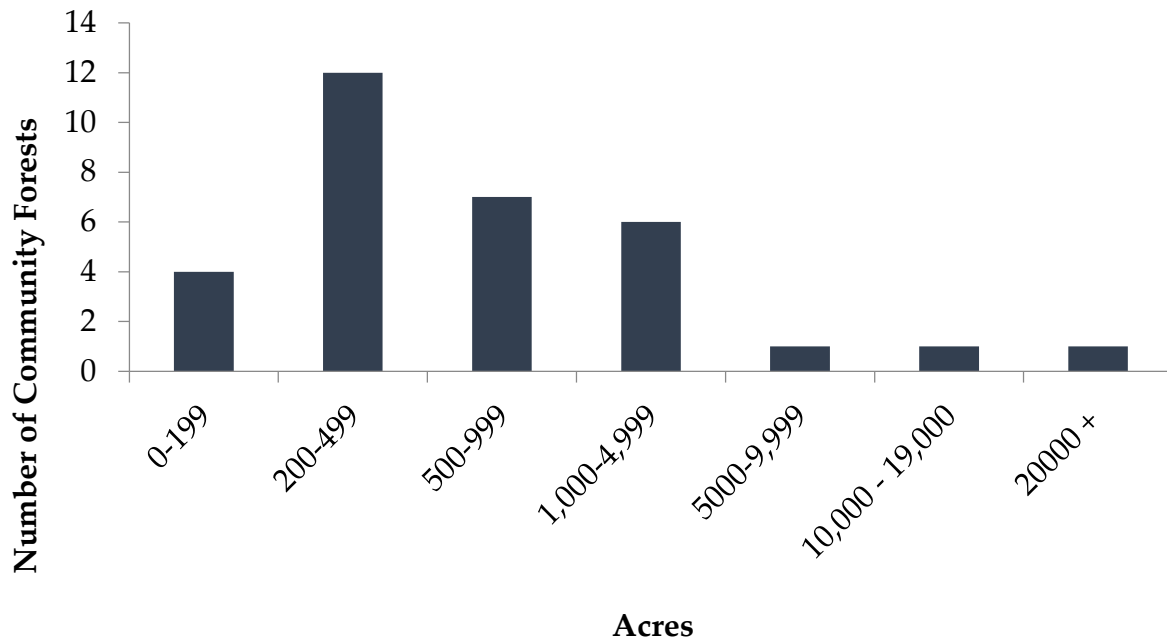


Figure 4. Size of community forests

Twenty-two of the community forests are located in the Northeast; all of the projects in the Northeast are located in Maine, New Hampshire and Vermont (Figure 5). Only 3 of the 32 community projects are located in the Southeast, 2 of these projects, Hall Mountain and Hoke Community Forest, are located in North Carolina.

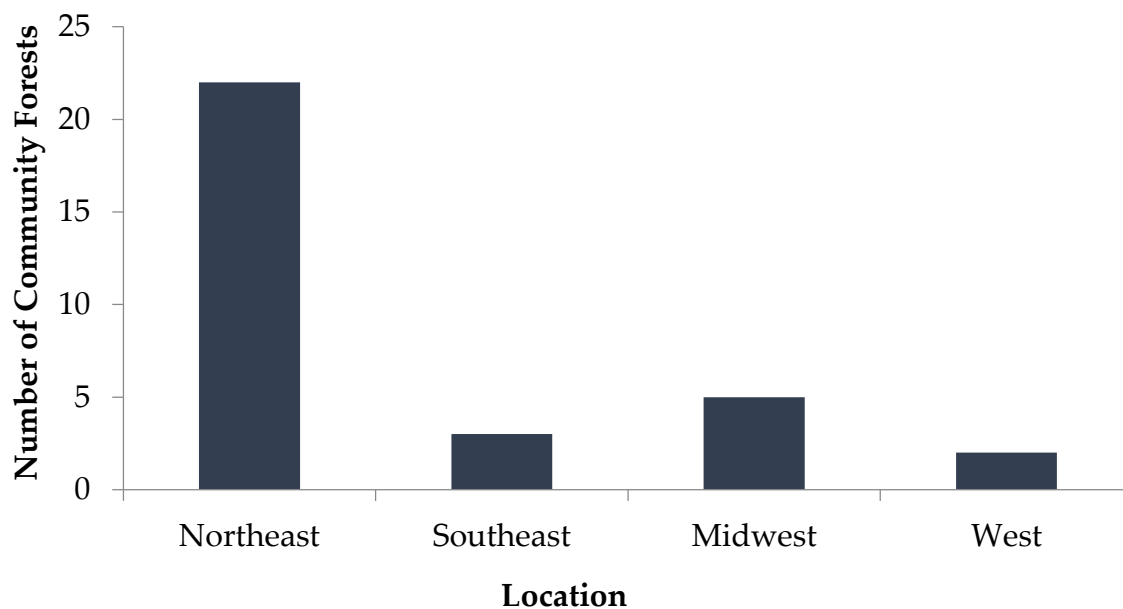


Figure 5. Location of community forests

The community forest projects are primarily owned by municipalities (Figure 6). Seventeen of the 21 municipally owned community forests are owned by towns or cities, 3 are owned by counties, and 1 is owned by a state. Five community forests are owned by non-profits. One project, Blackstrap Hill Community Forest in Maine, is jointly owned by a town and a nonprofit land trust; Falmouth Land Trust owns the southern section of the property and the Town of Falmouth owns the north section of the property. One project, the Brushwood Community Forest, is jointly owned by two towns, West Fairlee, VT and Fairlee, VT.

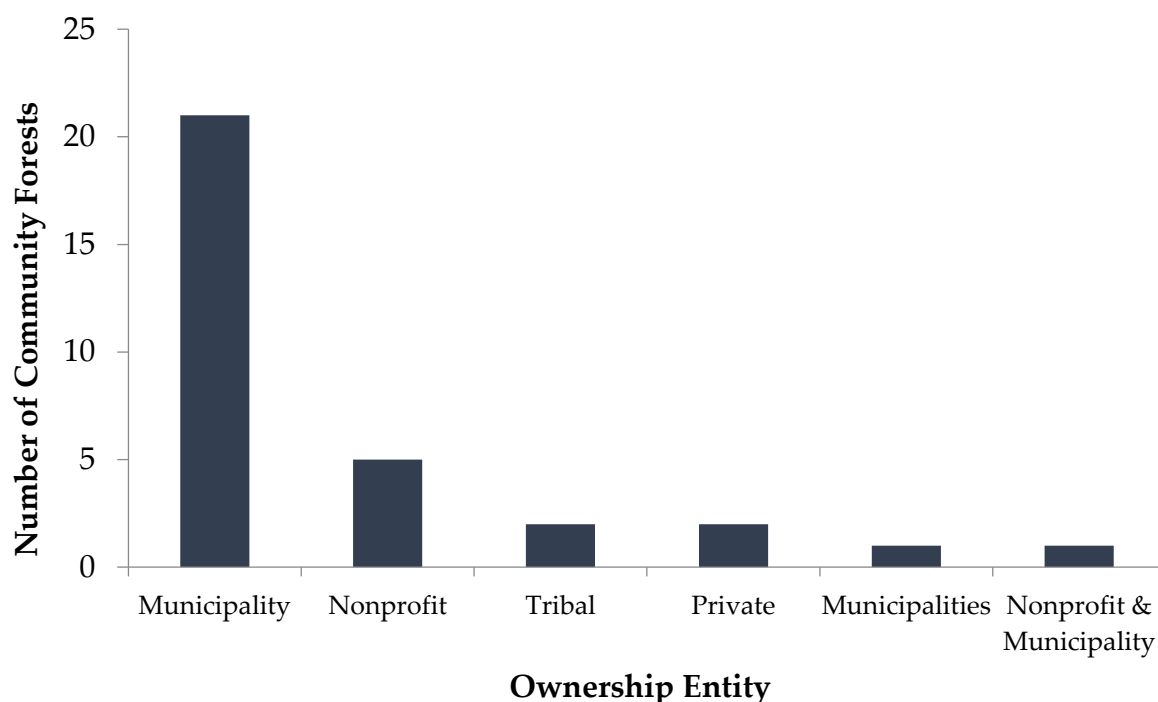
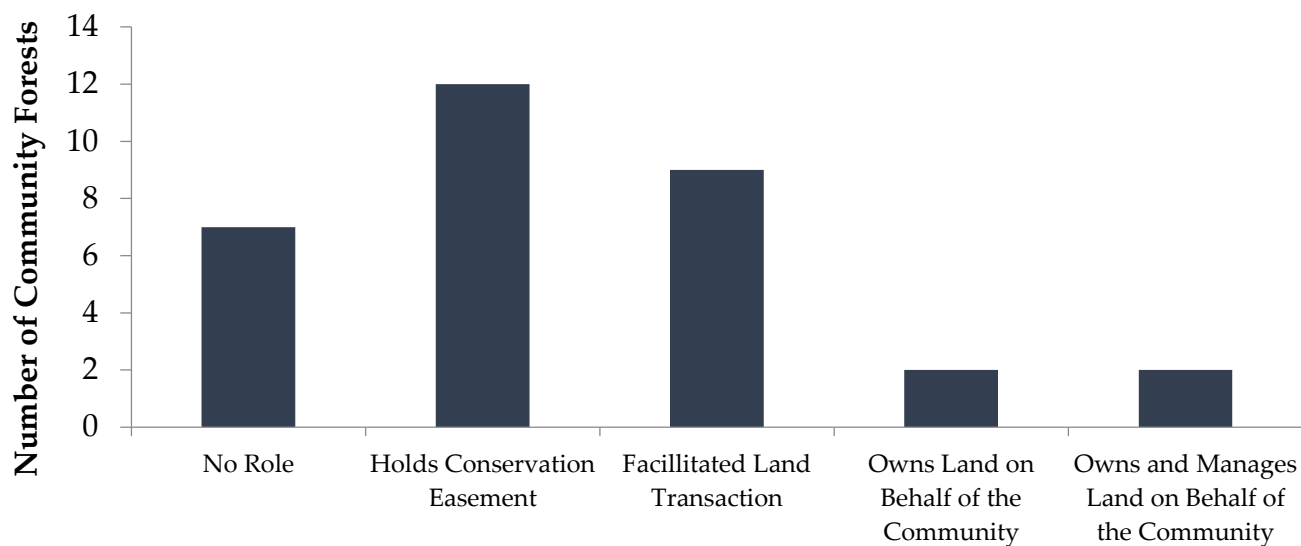


Figure 6. Ownership of community forests

Land trusts play no role in 7 of the community forests (Figure 7). In 12 of the projects, land trusts hold conservation easements. In 9 projects, land trusts facilitated land transactions; the land trust provided staff, skills and expertise to municipalities acquiring community forests. In some cases, the land trust facilitated the land transaction by acquiring the community forest property from another entity and then selling it to the municipality. Four community forests were owned by land trusts. Of these four, two of the land trusts oversee the community committee that makes the management decisions, the other two work with a group that the town oversees to make the management decisions.



Role of Land Trust

Figure 7. Role land trusts play in community forest projects

Below is a narrative, more detailed description of one of the community forest projects. The project was chosen to further demonstrate the variety of roles land trusts can play in community forests.

CASE STUDY – COOLEY-JERICO COMMUNITY FOREST ⁵

Information obtained through personal communication with Rebecca Brown, Ammonosuc Conservation Trust Executive Director on February 3, 2014

Acres: 843

Location: Easton, New Hampshire

Ownership Entity: Ammonosuc Conservation Trust ⁶, a non-profit land trust

The Ammonosuc Conservation Trust (ACT) is a non-profit, Land Trust Alliance accredited land trust that works to conserve land in New Hampshire's North County. ACT acquired 840 acres of land from an ACT board member in the fall of 2013 with the intention of creating a community forest. The property abuts the White Mountain National Forest and has been managed for timber for many generations. Public uses of the property include hunting, birding, cross country skiing, mountain biking, hiking and, wildlife photography and observation.

⁵ <http://www.townforest.org/>

⁶ <http://www.aconservationtrust.org/cooley-jericho-community-forest/>

COMMUNITY MANAGEMENT & BENEFITS

ACT holds the community forest on behalf of four towns in New Hampshire (Easton, Sugar Hill, Franconia, and Landaff). The forest is located in one town (Easton) and owned by ACT. However, there is a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) in place between ACT and the four towns ensuring (1) the towns will be formally involved in management and (2) the towns will share in all profits from timber harvests.

There is a Management Committee in place with representatives from each town and representatives from user groups such as mountain bikers and cross country skiers. Towns appoint representatives to the committee. Other committee members were part of the planning committee and have continued on to the management committee. The initial planning committee was formed to develop the management plan and the future vision of the property. It was formed with residents of Easton, Sugar Hill, Franconia and Landaff and representatives of ACT. Any other community members were welcome to join the planning committee.

BUDGET & FUNDING

The project budget was \$725,000 which included money needed for a natural resource inventory, a management plan, boundary line marking, legal due diligence and review, a stewardship endowment, signs, interpretive materials and other stewardship costs.

Funding for 50% of the project came from a United States Forest Service Community Forest Program grant. Additional funding was secured through grants from state conservation programs and the Open Space Institute. Additionally, the former landowner donated \$25,000 towards the stewardship endowment.

The annual operating cost of the community forest is estimated to be between \$1,000 and \$2,000 per year.

PARTNERS

ACT has a Memorandum of Understanding with the US Forest Service because they are an abutter to the White Mountain National Forest. ACT is also exploring a partnership with the Appalachian Mountain Club to conduct environmental education about sustainable forestry. ACT also plans to apply for Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) sustainable forestry certification.

3.1.2 Practitioner Interviews

The five community forest practitioners interviewed all agreed that one of the biggest successes of community forest projects are that they build community ownership over land (Figure 8). Rebecca Brown of the Ammonosuc Conservation Trust stated that “The [community] forest is

not and end in itself, [it's] creating and building a more vibrant community with a sense of place connected through a sense of ownership." (personal communication, February 3, 2014).

The other biggest success identified was that community forests made conservation more accepted. Mark Berry of the Downeast Lakes Land Trust stated, "This approach to conservation is more widely accepted because of the economic element." (personal communication, January 23, 2014). Monica McCann of The Conservation Fund agreed that the Hoke Community Forest "...turned the county around when it comes to conservation. Instead of being knee jerk against it, the community is now actively thinking, 'Are there other lands we can buy? Can we make this a destination for eco-tourism?' The mindset has changed regarding conservation." (personal communication, February 13, 2014).

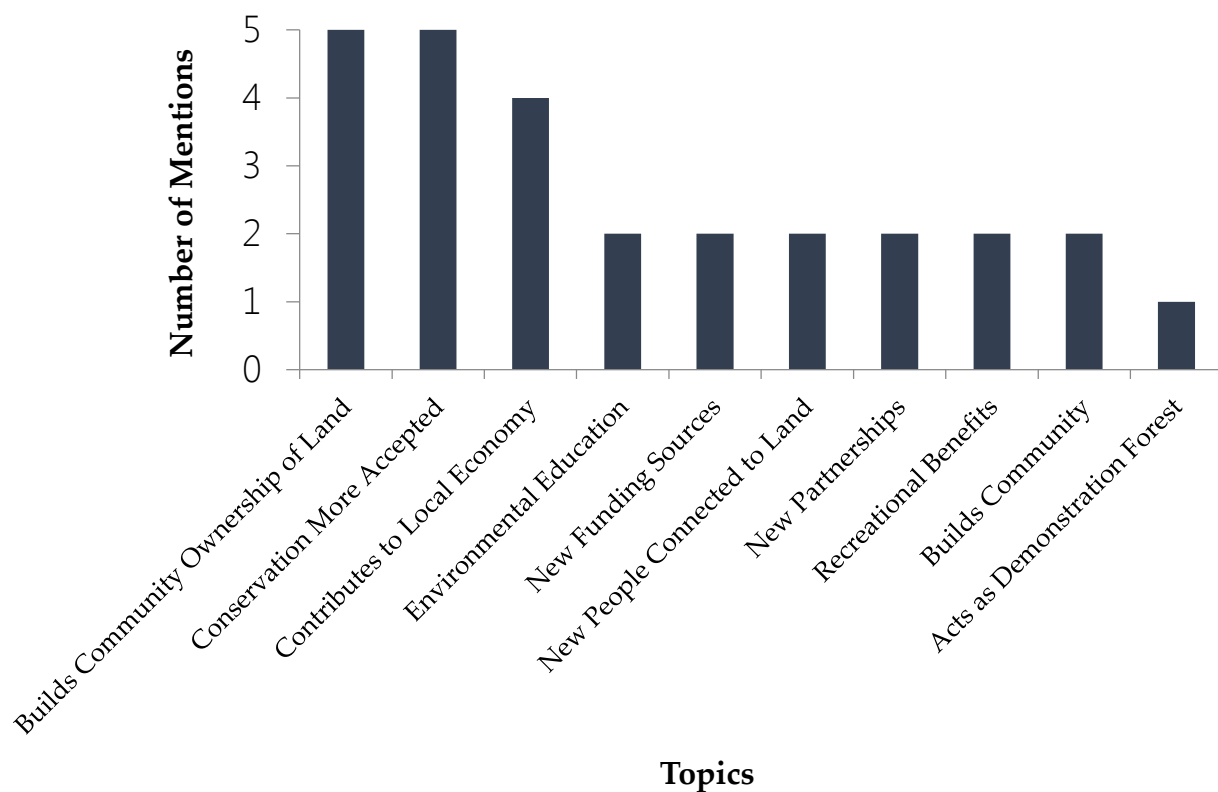


Figure 8. Practitioner identified successes of a community forest project (*Builds community ownership of land – 100%, Conservation more accepted – 100%, Contributes to local economy – 80%, Environmental education – 40%, New funding sources – 40%, New people connected to land – 40%, New partnerships – 40%, Recreational benefits – 40%, Builds community – 40%, Acts as demonstration forest – 20%*)

The largest challenge identified by practitioners was funding (Figure 9). One interviewee stated, "A community forest needs leadership, funding, and financial capacity. Who is willing to put in the time?" (personal communication, February 20, 2014). However, that same interviewee

pointed out that, “People are becoming more interested [in community forestry] because of new funding sources.” (personal communication, February 20, 2014)

Another challenge that was identified was that community forests can complicate best management practices. Sometimes the best, scientifically informed decisions about ecological management are sacrificed with a community committee making decisions about land management. Monica McCann stated, “The County is not land managers and especially not timber managers. How do you ensure that the land is managed as it’s supposed to be?” (personal communication January 23, 2014) Rebecca Brown agreed that, “Owning and managing [land] without other parties may be simpler” however she countered by saying, “I went into this because I feel like [community involvement] is an important part of the work.” (personal communication, February 3, 2014)

Many practitioners also agreed that land trust capacity can be one of the biggest challenges, “Land trusts need to have the capacity to continue being the project manager.” (Rebecca Brown, personal communication, February 3, 2014). Another interviewee stated that, “Land trusts are very capable, but working with and engaging communities is a new role and is a challenge to staff.” (personal communication, February 20, 2014).

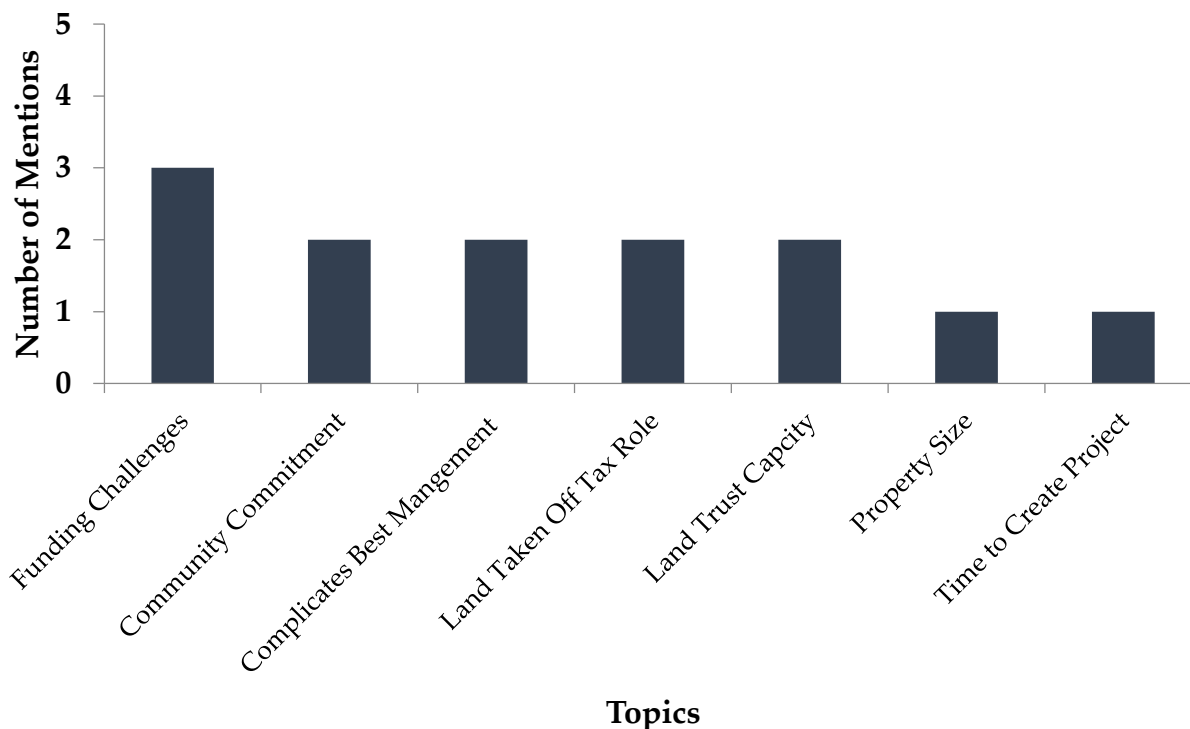


Figure 9. Practitioner identified challenges of a community forest project. (Funding challenges – 60%, Community commitment – 40%, Complicates best management – 40%, Land taken off tax role – 40%, Land trust capacity – 40%, Property size – 20%, Time to create project – 20%)

3.2 Future Interest in Community Forestry

3.2.1 Survey of North Carolina Land Trusts

Of the 19 North Carolina land trust employees surveyed, 84% would like to see the land trust they work for involved in community forestry in some way. When asked what role they would like to see their land trust play, 78% of respondents said they would like their land trust to facilitate land transitions for a municipality looking to own and manage a community forest (Figure 10). The second most popular role was for land trusts to hold conservation easements on other community forests. The three least popular responses involved the land trust managing a community forest on land the organization owned.

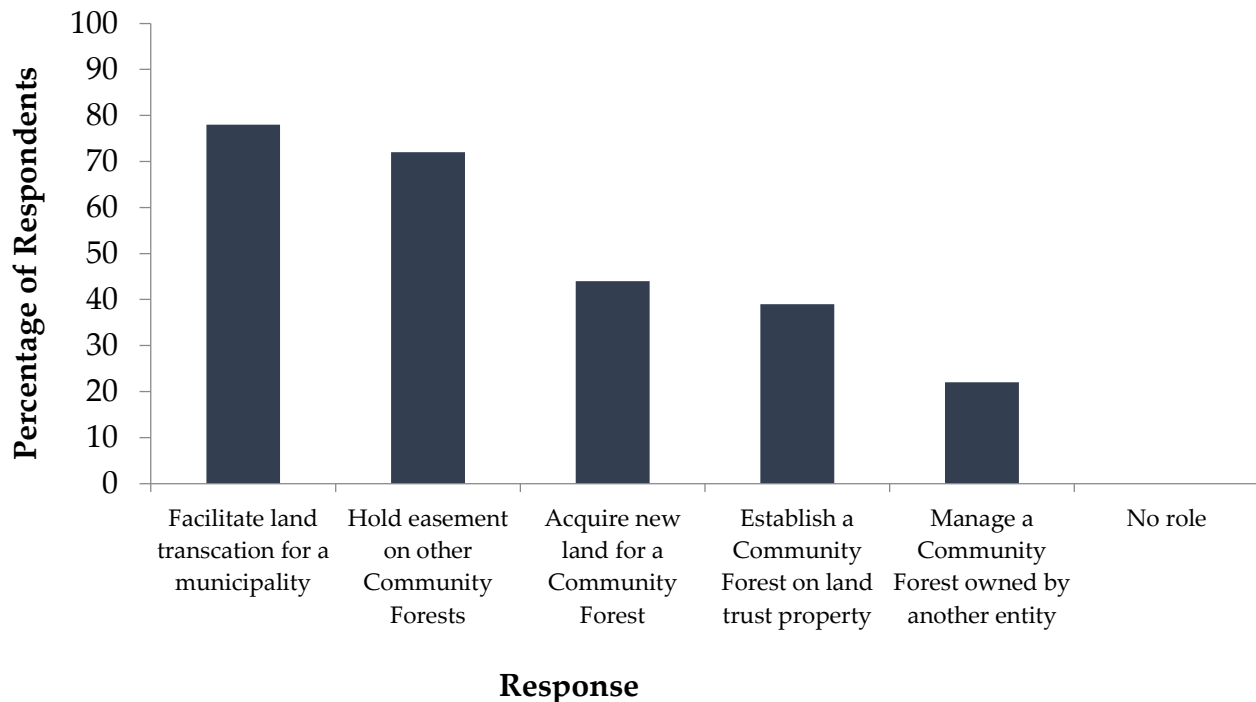


Figure 10. Percentage of land trust practitioner's responses to the question: *What role would you like your organization to play in community forestry?*

When asked about the biggest perceived benefits to the land trust for being involved in community forestry, 94% responded that a community forest would increase the number of people connected to land (Figure 11). 82% of land trust respondents agreed that one of the biggest potential benefits would be more land conserved and 71% agreed that a community forest project would increase land trust relevance.

In open responses a large number of land trust practitioners wrote of benefits to the community as an additional potential success. Others stated, “[Community forestry] is a valuable tool that could be used to conserve lands, it involves both the community and other stakeholders in the process.” and “[It] is another point of engagement with our local community, [it] could potentially involve residents who don’t own conservation worthy land.” Another respondent observed “We believe in conserving working lands, I think we need an intermediate model between national forests and private forests.” Finally, a respondent simply summed up the successes with, “Good for community, good for conservation, good for forest.”

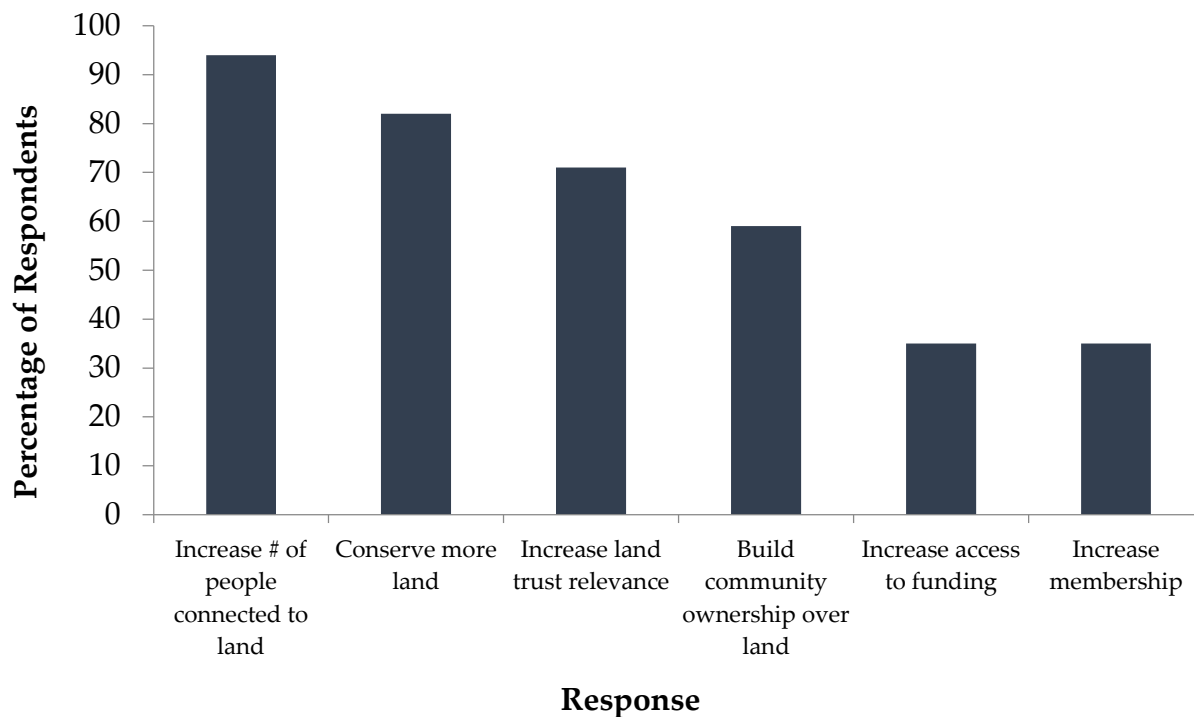


Figure 11. Percentage of land trust practitioner’s responses to the question – *What do you see as the biggest benefits of your organization being involved in community forestry?*

When asked about the biggest perceived challenges of a land trust pursuing a community forest project, 89% of land trust respondents identified staff capacity (Figure 12). Funding was the second most popular response with 84% of respondents followed by ensuring long term community commitment with 63% of the respondents.

Although 84% of respondents identified funding as one of the biggest challenges, a survey respondent in an open response commented that, “[Community forests] could provide an alternative source of funds for land protection and community enhancement.”

Many respondents reaffirmed concerns about staff capacity in open survey responses stating, “We do not currently have the staff capacity to involve the community in developing and implementing the community-based management of such a forest.” and “It sounds challenging and complicated to initiate and manage.” Some other respondents pointed to a lack of education as a challenge to land trusts involvement in community forestry, “[There is] a lack of proper understanding of what would be involved in owning/operating a community forest property.”

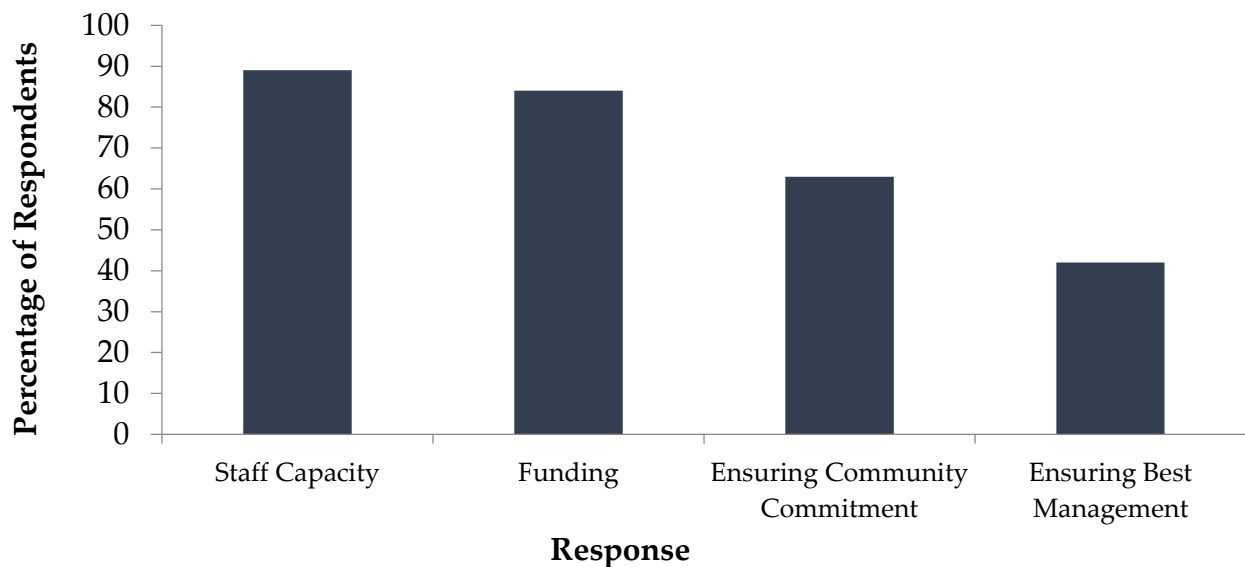


Figure 12. Percentage of land trust practitioner’s responses to the question - *What do you see as the biggest challenges of being involved in community forestry?*

Land trust practitioners were asked what activities they would like see on a community forest (Figure 13). Recreational activities such as hiking (100%) and trail running (89%) were popular responses. 78% responded that they would like to see sustainable forestry occur on community forests and 89% were interested in a community forest acting as a demonstration forest for other landowners.

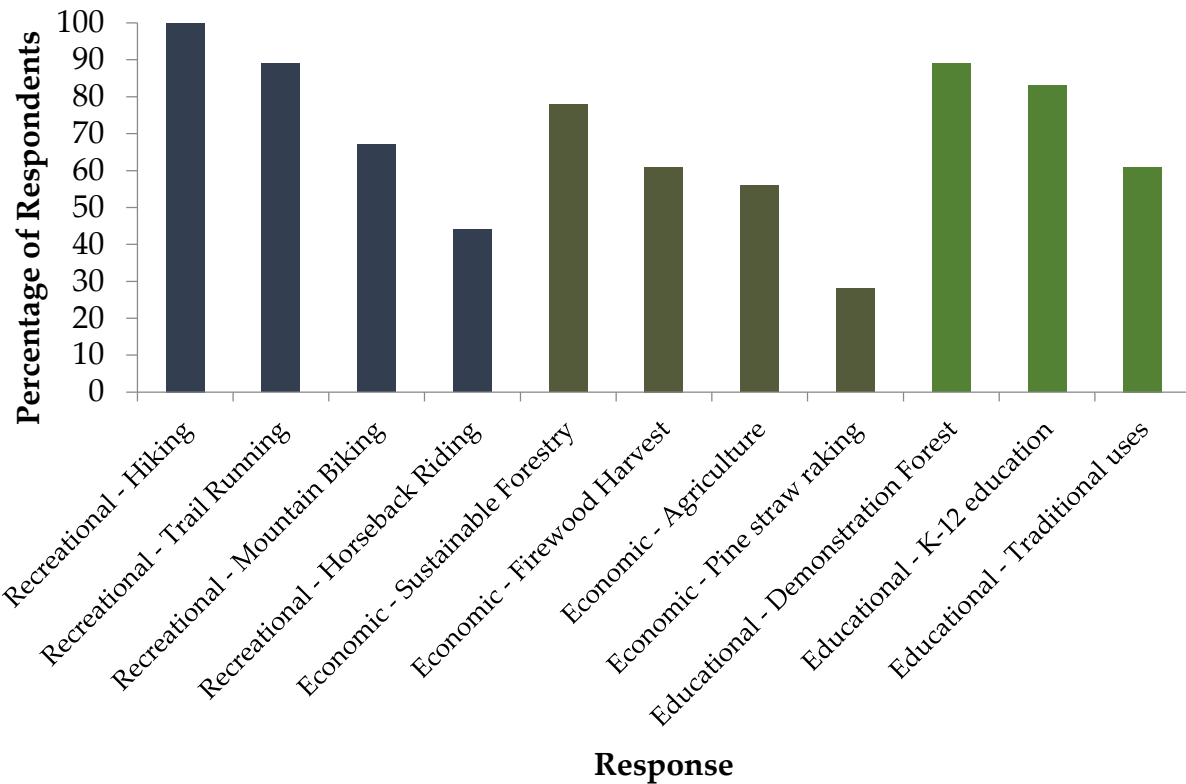


Figure 13. Percentage of land trust practitioner's responses to the question - *What activities would you like to see on a community forest?*

3.2.2 Survey of Triangle Land Conservancy Community Members

One land trust practitioner in the land trust survey commented, "[I'm] doubtful there is interest for this kind of project." To assess this concern, Triangle Land Conservancy's community members were surveyed. 97% of community members responded that they would like to see a local land trust involved in community forestry. When asked what role a land trust should play in community forestry, 80% expressed interest in a land trust acting to facilitate land transactions to help municipalities acquire a community forest (Figure 14). This was the most popular response in both the land trust survey and the community survey. The community responses differed from the land trust survey in the subsequent responses. The second most popular role (77%) was for land trusts to acquire new land for a community forest project and the third most popular role (64%) was for land trusts to establish a community forest on current land trust property.

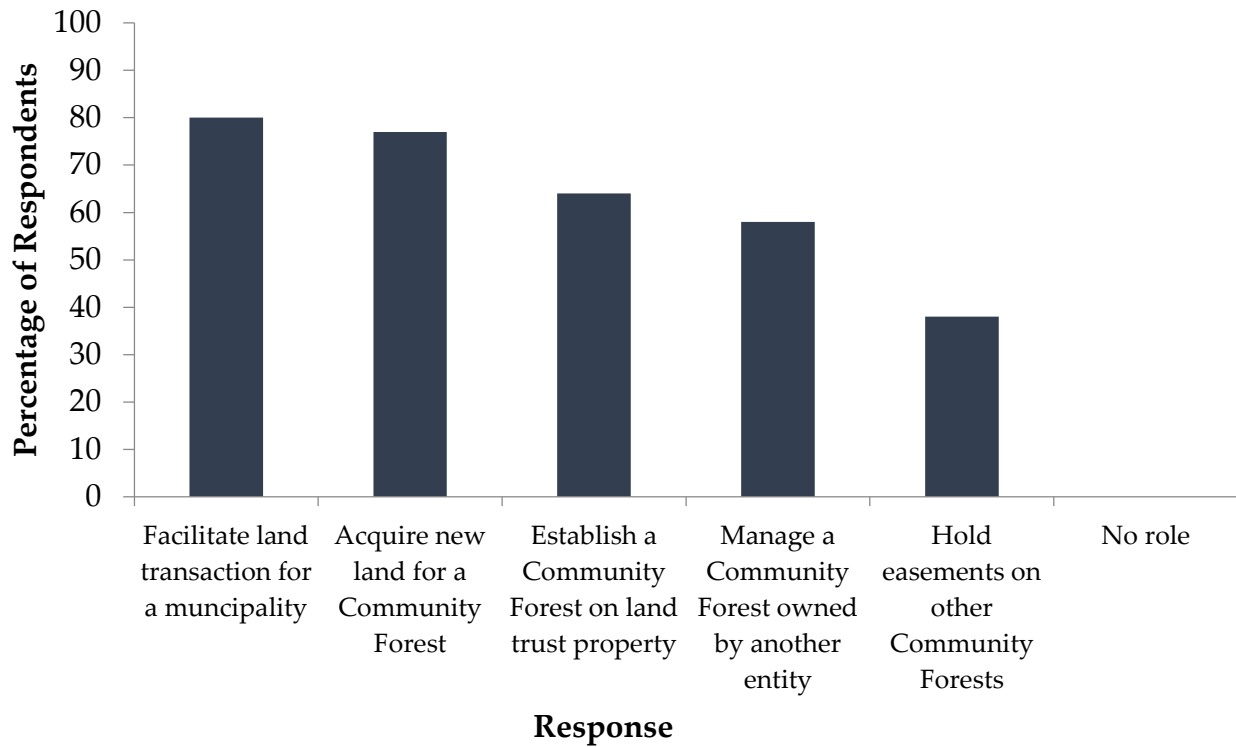


Figure 14. Percentage of community member's responses to the question – *What role would you like your local land trust to play in community forestry?*

Community members were asked what activities they would like see on a community forest (Figure 15). Recreational activities such as hiking (100%) and trail running (87%) were popular responses. 71% responded that they would like to see sustainable forestry occur on community forests and 90% were interested in a community forest acting as a demonstration forest for other landowners. These responses were very closely in line with the responses from land trust practitioners.

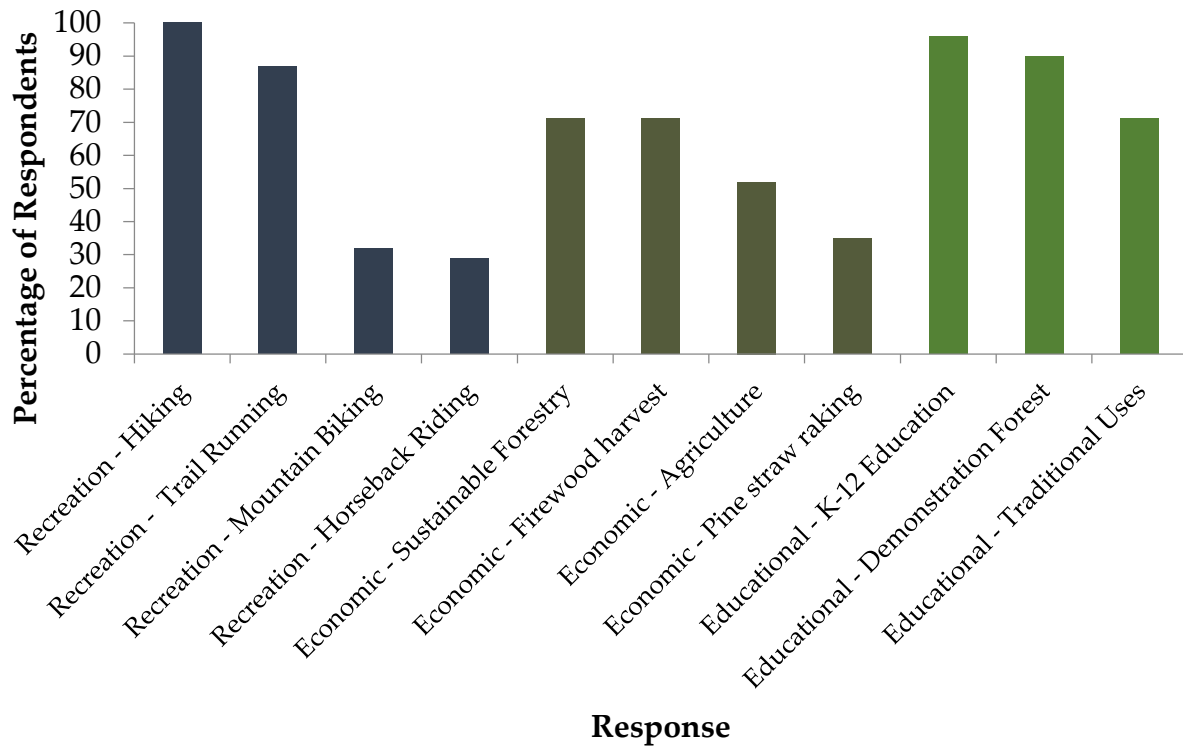


Figure 15. Percentage of community member's responses to the question - *What activities would you like to see on a community forest?*

4. Discussion

4.1 Characteristics of Community Forests

4.1 Size of Community Forests

The case study analysis of current community forest projects has key implications for land trusts' involvement in community forestry. Half of current community forest projects in the United States are less than 500 acres. As most land trusts do not own many properties larger than 500 or 600 acres, this finding suggests that land trusts could manage community forest projects on land they already own.

The size of a community forest project effects the financial implications of the project. Mark Berry, the Executive Director of Downeast Lakes Land Trust that owns the 27,000 acre Farm Cove Community Forests suggests that size constrains what is possible but not if the project is

successful. For example, the Farm Cove Community Forest can sustainably conduct timber harvests every year and sometimes twice a year. This brings in enough money to support the operations of the forest and restoration work (Mark Berry, personal communication, January 23, 2014). On the other hand, a community forest such as the Cooley-Jericho Community Forest, which is only about 800 acres, plans to harvest timber just once every 30-40 years (Rebecca Brown, personal communication, February 3, 2014). Revenue from timber alone cannot sustain the management of the forest. The flipside is that smaller community forests are less costly and often easier to manage.

4.1.2 Location of Community Forests

The finding that most (22 out of 32) of the current community forest projects are located in the Northeast also has important implications for land trusts. The Northeast has a strong history of communal land ownership and many residents are already familiar with the concept of a community forest (McCullough 1995). This may cause community forest projects in the Northeast to be more successful than they would be in other areas of the country. Residents in the Southeast, for example, may be less interested in the idea of a community forest due to lack of experience with communal land ownership. Additionally, because most of the community forests are located in the Northeast, a large number of institutions that support community forest projects are also located in the Northeast. Two notable institutions are The Northern Forest Center and The Trust for Public Land. The network of land trusts, towns, and individuals who have worked or currently work on a community forest project is larger in the Northeast likely because there are more projects and there is a longer history of community forests.

The Southeast is starting to build a network of institutions interested in community forestry. The Conservation Fund has already assisted in a developing Hoke Community Forest in North Carolina and is looking to develop an additional project in Georgia (Monica McCann, personal communication, February 13, 2014). Additionally, The Trust for Public Land is a nationwide organization that could assist with community forest projects outside of the Northeast.

It is likely that there are fewer community forest projects in the West because publically owned forestland is much more prominent as compared to the East where most of the forestland is privately owned (Figure 16). This suggests that there is greater opportunity for community forest projects in the Northeast and Southeast where there is a larger number of privately owned forests that could be converted into community forests.

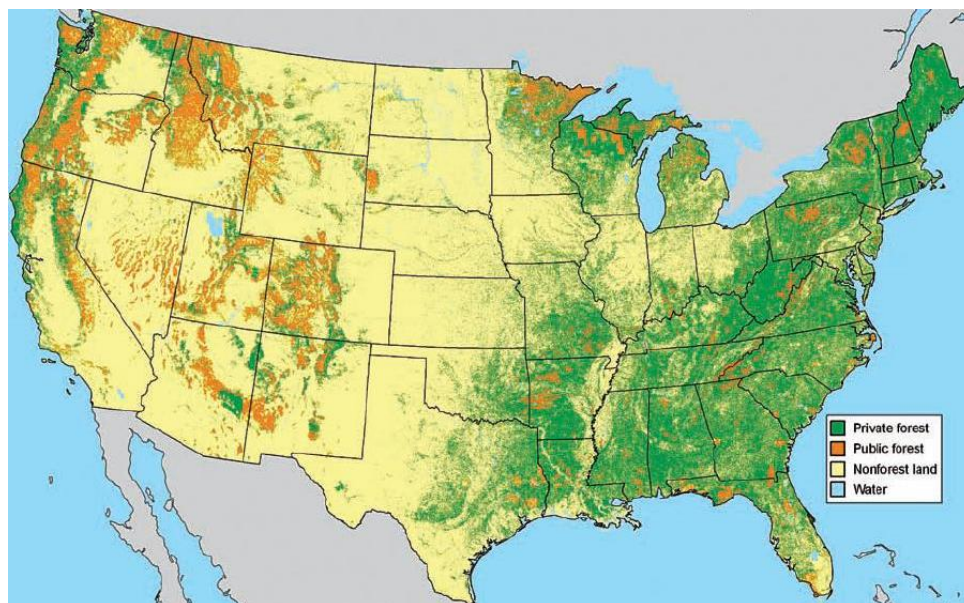


Figure 16. Forest ownership in the contiguous United States, 2006 (USDA Forest Service, Northern Research Station)

4.2 Role of Land Trusts in Community Forestry

Both community members and land trust practitioners agree that the most desired role for land trusts to play in community forestry is to facilitate land transactions for municipalities looking to acquire and operate community forests (Figure 17).

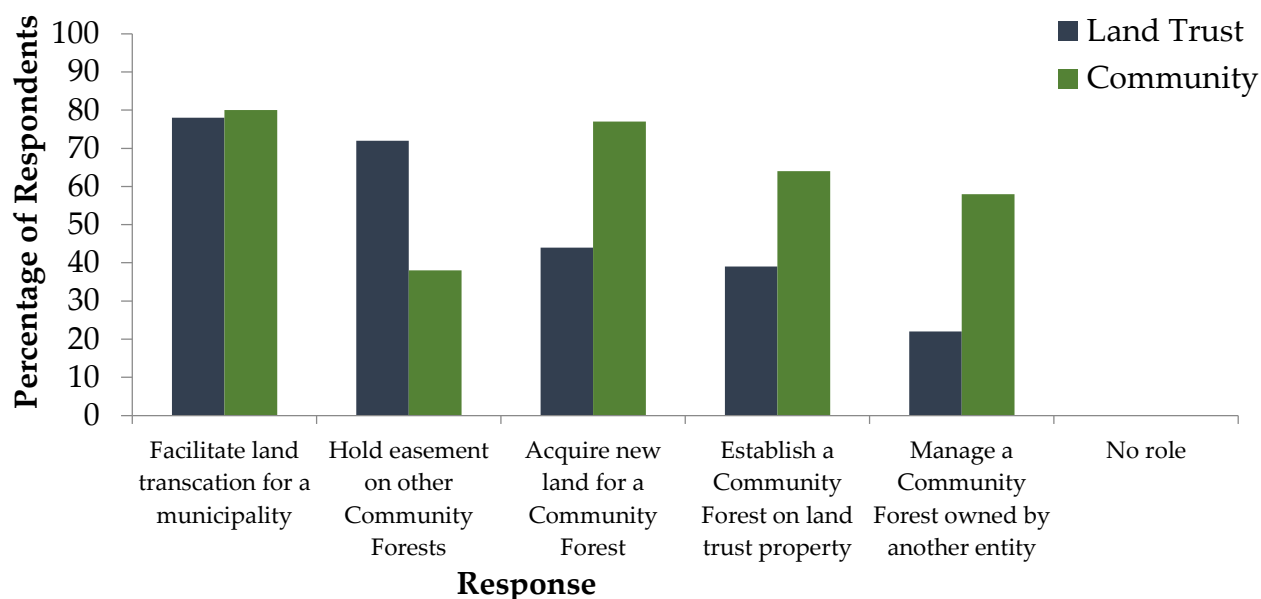


Figure 17. Responses to the question – *What role would you like to see land trusts play in community forestry?*

Land trusts are already playing an active role in facilitating land transactions for other entities acquiring community forest. Land trusts facilitated transactions in nine of the thirty-two current community forests analyzed. The land trusts and organizations that are already facilitating land transactions can act as a resource for land trusts that are looking to become involved. Some of these land trusts and organizations are Vermont Land Trust, Trust for Public Land, and The Conservation Fund.

Additionally, this is a role that will not require much additional capacity from land trusts. Land trusts are already very skilled in land transactions thus it would require little additional expertise. Although it may add a small amount of staff time, it would only be a short term commitment.

Finally, this role would help to fill some of the identified gaps in the current community forestry movement. Land trusts facilitating transactions could act to fill four of the six gaps identified by Lyman et al. (2011): acquisition and financing, funding, stewardship, and conservation planning. Land trusts have the expertise to identify funding for land acquisition, have experience in stewardship and conservation planning of their own fee simple properties, and are well versed in land acquisition as it is already a cornerstone of land trust work. In addition, the most successful community forest projects have had “intermediary organizations” that provide support and assistance to communities (Christoffersen et al. 2008).

Facilitating land transactions for municipalities looking to acquire community forests is in line with identified gaps of the current community forest movement, is the preferred role by both community members and current land trust practitioners, and it does not require and additional expertise or much additional capacity by land trust staff.

There was some discrepancy between land trust practitioners and community members in their response to subsequent roles land trusts should play in community forestry. Land trust practitioners second most popular response was for land trusts to hold conservation easements on community forests owned by other entities. The roles that required land trusts to own and manage community forest projects received the lowest number of responses. This is likely because of land trust’s concerns over the capacity and funding needed to manage a community forest.

Community members on the other hand, identified acquiring land to establish a community forest and creating a community forest on current land trust property as the second and third most desired roles for land trusts to play. This is likely because community members are generally in favor of the idea of a community forest and have confidence in land trusts ability to manage community forests. Community members likely do not have as strong a sense of the land trust capacity needed to manage a community forest. Holding a conservation easement

was the least popular role identified by community members likely because community members may not be familiar with what it entails and may not know that land trusts are already well versed in holding conservation easements.

4.2.1 Successes of Land Trusts' Involvement in Community Forestry

Surveyed land trust practitioners pointed to increased number of people connected to land as one of the greatest perceived successes of a community forest project. Interviewed community forest practitioners agreed that one of the greatest observed successes of a community forest was that community members previously uninterested in or against land conservation became supporters of conservation. Because a community forest often times provides economic benefits as well as conservation benefits, it can act as a middle ground between community members that were previously at odds about conservation. By demonstrating the economic value of the land and the direct benefits to community members, land trusts may no longer seen as taking land from communities but may be seen as providing land for communities. This is especially likely if there is an arrangement between towns and land trusts so that the economic benefits of the forest go directly to a town fund.

Another perceived success of a community forest project is that more land will be conserved. Land trusts have historically sought land with high conservation value. However, community forests could allow land trusts to acquire land with lower conservation value but high social and economic value. Through managing the land as a community forest, the land trusts could then restore the conservation and ecological value. A great example is planted loblolly pine forests in the Southeast. If land trusts had a better option for managing this land, such as a community forest, they may be more willing to acquire the land. This could be hugely beneficial as a vast amount of land in the Southeast are planted loblolly pine forests. Additionally, there is fast rate of turnover of forests nationwide due to ownership by timber investment management organizations (TIMOs) and real estate investment trusts (REITs) (Wear and Greis 2013). If land trusts are willing to acquire land that has been recently heavily forested, then forestland could transition ownership from industrial forestry minded TIMOs and REITs to conservation minded land trusts.

4.2.2 Challenges of Land Trusts' Involvement in Community Forestry

Surveyed land trust practitioners identified funding and staff capacity as the two largest perceived challenges of land trust involvement in community forestry. Interviewed community forest practitioners also identified funding as the largest challenge of creating a community forest. Contrary to this, some practitioners interviewed pointed to new funding sources as a reason why land trusts might get involved in community forestry. The United States Forest

Service Community Forest Program⁷ has a budget of \$4 million to fund municipalities', tribes and non-profits in creating community forests. Each project can be funded up to \$400,000. Additionally, many states and private foundations, such as the Open Space Institute⁸, have community forest grant programs.

Another perceived challenge is that land trusts do not have the staff capacity to manage successful community forest projects. Julie Renaud Evans suggested, "One current barrier is that land trusts do not have as strong expertise working with communities on large community planning effort." (personal communication, February 20, 2014). Land trusts have great strength in managing land but do not have as much experience in managing communities and community planning efforts. Additionally, current community forest practitioners suggested that one challenge is ensuring the best management. If a community committee is making management decisions as opposed to the land trust staff or scientific experts, it is much harder to ensure that the decisions are the best for the ecological health of the land. This challenge could be overcome by ensuring that foresters, ecologists and experts in land management sit on the community management committee.

4.3 Economic Implications of a Community Forest Project

Community forests that are managed for sustainable timber harvests can have large costs but can also bring in a large amount of income for the community.

The 843-acre Cooley-Jericho community forest is estimated to have operating costs of about \$2000 a year (Rebecca Brown, personal communication, February 3, 2014). However, the total project budget including acquisition costs is \$725,000. Thus the total cost is \$860 per acre and the yearly operating cost is \$2.37 per acre.

The 7,108 acre 13 Mile Woods Community Forest in Errol, NH generated more than \$1.7 million dollars in net revenues over seven years (Reaves and Ceroni 2012). That is \$34 per acre per year. Between 2013 and 2022 the forest is predicted to generate over \$1,070,000 as a result of timber from sustainable forest operations. This per acre revenue is highly dependent on the size of a community forest as smaller projects will not be able to conduct sustainable timber harvests as frequently as larger projects.

In the past seven years, the 13 Mile Woods Community Forest has generated over 2 million dollars in the logging sector. It has directly supported two local full time jobs in the forestry sector and indirectly supported an additional ten jobs in the forest products industry (Reaves

⁷ <http://www.fs.fed.us/spf/coop/programs/loa/cfp.shtml>

⁸ http://www.osiny.org/site/PageServer?pagename=Issues_Forests_More

and Ceroni 2012). The over 27,000-acre Farm Cove Community Forest in Maine is said to sustain an average of 100 jobs (Mark Berry, personal communication, January 23, 2014).

The 13 Mile Woods Community Forest has also led to \$2.2 million in visitor spending in the Errol area and has created 20 jobs through recreational activities (Reaves and Ceroni 2012)

There is little data pointing to the yearly costs of managing a community forest as most community forest practitioners do not have the costs partitioned out of general organization operating costs and also many community forest have not been owned for long enough to have good estimates.

5. Conclusions

This study found that both land trust practitioners and community members want land trusts to become involved in community forestry. Most land trusts are not currently deeply involved in the community forestry movement but there is a desire for this to change.

Additionally, capacity and funding are land trusts' biggest concerns while an increase in number of people connected to the land and an increase in amount of land protected are some of the biggest perceived successes. Funding may not be as large a concern as land trust practitioners perceive it to be as there are multiple grant programs that specifically fund community forest projects.

Community members and land trusts are most interested in land trusts acting as facilitators for municipalities looking to acquire community forest projects. This interest is in line with the role land trusts are already playing in community forestry as nine of thirty-two community forest projects in the United States were facilitated by land trusts. Additionally, facilitating land transactions does not require as much additional staff capacity and funding as compared to some of the other roles land trusts could play in community forestry.

The majority of both land trust practitioners and community members would like to see community forest projects that provide recreational and economic benefits. Land trusts could produce income through engaging in sustainable forestry. This income could either directly benefit communities or could be used to conduct ecological restoration and improve the community forest property.

5.1 Recommendations for Triangle Land Conservancy

Based off of the above conclusions, the following recommendations have been developed for Triangle Land Conservancy's involvement in community forestry.

1) Help towns and counties facilitate acquisition of community forests.

Triangle Land Conservancy operates in six counties in North Carolina: Durham, Orange, Chatham, Johnston, Wake and Lee. There are three major cities within TLC's operating area: Durham, Chapel Hill and Raleigh. Most of these counties, cities, and the towns surrounding the counties own land that could become community forests. The North Carolina Forest Service runs an Urban and Community Forest Grant Program that may be able to fund community forest projects in municipalities⁹. Resourceful Communities, a subset of The Conservation Fund, is assisting the N.C. Forest Service in administering this grant.

2) Increase staff capacity to manage a community forest project.

Triangle Land Conservancy can be strategic in increasing staff education on community based environmental management and community organizing. TLC does not necessarily need to hire new personnel with the specific role of working in community forestry. However, in roles that TLC is already going to fill, they could look to hire employees that have supplementary skills in community organizing.

3) Peruse future land acquisitions with the intention of creating a community forest.

Triangle Land Conservancy does not need to currently commit to purchase properties with the intention of creating a community forest. However, TLC could pursue or accept land projects that may have the potential of becoming future community forests. For example, TLC could go forward with properties that have planted loblolly pine stands. Under the community forestry framework, loblolly pine stands do not detract from the conservation value of the property but instead add to the future social and economic values of the property.

4) Create a community planning and/or a community management committee for the northern section of Brumley Forest.

Brumley forest is a 600-acre property owned by TLC. TLC is currently undergoing a comprehensive management planning process for the property. TLC could model the planning process after the Ammonosuc Conservation Trust and create a community planning committee. TLC could then create a community management committee. The management committee could be a general land management committee as opposed to a specific community forest management committee and would act as a pilot test to explore TLC's capacity in managing a community committee.

⁹ http://ncforestservice.gov/Urban/urban_grant_overview.htm

5.1.1 Additional Considerations

Triangle Land Conservancy may have some concerns over the public response to timber harvesting. In October of 2011, TLC received some bad press about a timber operation on one of the land trust's properties that was conducted for ecological restoration¹⁰. There was miscommunication between the press and the public about the purpose of these timber harvests. Understandably, TLC is cautious about engaging in any timber harvests because as one land trust practitioner pointed out in the survey "There can be negative blowback from a badly done forest harvest on to what is perceived as a land conservation (and hence no tree cutting) organization. Negative opinions in the community can have major impacts on the fund raising activities."

Triangle Land Conservancy should note that community forests may provide a way to go forth with sustainable, ecologically beneficial timber harvests while avoiding any "negative blowback". With community members ultimately responsible for the management decisions, TLC would act more as an organization that provides land for the community rather than the managing entity. Additionally, as seen in the study, a community forest project can still exist and be successful even when there is no sustainable forestry. Although further exploration is needed, 71% of TLC community members surveyed indicated that they would like sustainable forestry on a potential future community forest.

5.2 Future Research

This study can be expanded to a national scale. Land trust practitioners in the entire United States, not just North Carolina can be surveyed and a larger community could be surveyed. Further research could also be done into the economic costs and benefits of community forests and how community forests could supplement funding for a land trust. Further analysis of the successes and challenges of community forests owned by land trusts is needed once more land trusts are involved in community forestry.

¹⁰ <http://www.indyweek.com/indyweek/the-triangle-land-conservancys-deep-cuts/Content?oid=2680713>

Acknowledgments

Thank you to Monica McCann of the Conservation Fund, Mark Berry of Downeast Lakes Land Trust, Kate Wanner of the Trust for Public Land, Julie Renaud Evans of the Northern Forest Center, and Rebecca Brown of the Ammonosuc Conservation Trust for their time and invaluable insight into current community forest projects. Thank you also to the staff at Triangle Land Conservancy and Dr. Dean Urban for their assistance through this project. Thank you also to all survey participants for without which this study would not be possible.



Triangle Land Conservancy, Horton Grove Nature Preserve

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Appendix A – Community Forest Interview

Thank you for taking the time to answer these questions and to assist me in my Master's Project at Duke's Nicholas School of the Environment.

If your organization has more than one community forest project please pick a representative project. We will discuss managing more than one project on the phone or feel free to add comments about additional projects in the *ADDITIONAL COMMENTS* section.

Any additional thoughts or questions please contact Betsy Cook at elizabeth.s.cook@duke.edu or 860-462-1555.

GENERAL INFORMATION

How would you define a community forest?

What is the total acreage of the community forest?

What is the organizational structure of the community forest?

Is there a board or committee that oversees management?

How are management decisions made?

Who owns the property outright?

Is there a conservation easement on the property?

COMMUNITY

How would you define the community you serve through this project?

How large is the community?

How do you ensure that community input is considered?

How do you ensure that benefits from the community forest go back to the community?

What are these benefits?

How do you measure these benefits?

FINANCIALS

How was the project funded? Please discuss the percentage of funding that was private v. public?

What were the primary public sources for funding the project?

How much income per year is brought in by activities completed on the community forest?

What are the main activities that bring in income on your community forest? (These can be by your organization or community members)

How is the income distributed? Does it go to the land trust or directly to the community?

What are the main non-income producing activities done on your community forest (by your organization or community members)?

What is the cost of management per year on the community forest?

Who are the primary partners you have worked with through this project?

What activities have been contracted out?

WRAP UP

What are some of the primary tradeoffs for an organization that come from managing land as a community forest?

What are some of the biggest successes or pros of your community forest project?

What are some of the biggest challenges or cons of your community forest project?

Would you advocate having more community forest projects? Why or why not?

Appendix B – Survey of North Carolina Land Trusts

Thank you for taking the time to share your thoughts on whether your land trust has an interest or the capacity to be involved in a community forest project. All questions are hypothetical and will only be used for research purposes.

Please read the following information about community forests. There will be questions following the description.

The term community forest is used loosely to apply to many different types of land projects. This survey will use the following definition created by the Community Forest Collaborative (CFC).

Definition: The Community Forest model secures access and rights to the forest resource at the community level; it promotes community participation in management decisions; it ensures that communities receive value and benefits from the land that can support and reinforce community priorities and economic development objectives; and it secures permanent protection of the conservation values of the forestland.

This Community Forest Model has four main components:

- (1) Community forests are owned and managed by a municipal entity or by another group (e.g. land trust) on behalf of a community.
- (2) The proposed acquisition and management structure ensures community participation in and responsibility for management decisions.
- (3) The community has secure access to the value and benefits of the forest, both monetary and nonmonetary, that can support and reinforce community priorities and economic development objectives.
- (4) The conservation values of the forestland are permanently protected.

IMPORTANT: Most community forests have a formal decision making body made up of community members that direct management decisions on the forest. If the community forest is completely run by the land trust then this decision making body would also have to be managed by the land trust. If it is a joint project between a land trust and a municipality, sometime the municipality manages this decision making body.

One element of a community forest is that there must be some secure, formal way for the community to receive any monetary or non-monetary benefits of the forest. If timber harvests

occur on the property, the community must receive some benefits from the economic activity.

Were you familiar with the concept of a community forest before this description?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

Based on this description, would you like to see your organization involved in community forestry at level?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

Based on your answer above, please provide three reasons why you would or wouldn't like to see your organization involved in community forestry.

What role would you like to see your organization play in establishing a community forest? Please check all that apply.

- ☐ The land trust should play no role.
- ☐ The land trust should assist towns or counties in acquiring land that will then be community forests.
- ☐ The land trust should manage town or county owned land as a community forest.
- ☐ The land trust should establish community forest on a property it already owns.
- ☐ The land trust should acquire new land with the intention of establishing a community forest
- ☐ Land trusts should hold a working forest conservation easement on a community forest owned by another entity

If your land trust was involved in community forestry, what do you see as the biggest potential benefits that could come from a community forest project? Please check all that apply.

- ☐ Increased Membership
- ☐ More land conserved
- ☐ Increased access to funding
- ☐ Help build community ownership over land
- ☐ Increase number of people connected to land
- ☐ None

What do you see as some of the biggest challenges if your land trust were to pursue a community forest project?

- Ensuring the best management of the land
- Ensuring the long term community commitment to direct management of the land
- Having enough staff time or expertise to run a community forest project
- Having enough funding to run a community forest project
- None

If a Community Forest existed – what activates would you like to see on this land? Please check all that apply.

- Recreational - Hiking
- Recreational - Mountain Biking
- Recreational - Horseback Riding
- Recreational - Trail Running
- Economic - Sustainable Forestry (revenue from sustainable timber harvest go back to the community)
- Economic - Sustainable Agriculture (revenues from sustainable farming go back to the community)
- Economic - Firewood harvest of downed or unhealthy trees
- Economic - Pine straw raking
- Educational - Education for other forestland owners (property acts as a demonstration forest for sustainable forestry)
- Educational - Education to children about the benefits of land management and stewardship
- Educational - Education about traditional uses of land in the Southeast

Please share any additional comments, concerns, or thought you have regarding land trusts involvement in community forestry.

Appendix C – Survey of Triangle Land Conservancy Community Members

Thank you for your interest in sharing your thoughts on how land trusts can continually work to better steward land and serve your community.

My name is Betsy Cook. I am a graduate student from the Nicholas School of the Environment. I am conducting a survey to gauge interest in using Community Forests as a conservation tool for land trusts.

I will provide you with information on Community Forests and then ask you to answer some questions. This survey should take no more than 10 minutes. Triangle Land Conservancy has agreed to distribute the survey on my behalf. Your individual responses will remain confidential.

If you have any questions please e-mail me at elizabeth.s.cook@duke.edu.

If you are willing to participate in this survey, please click yes.

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

Thank you for your time. Please feel free to skip any questions that you do not wish to answer.

1. If someone asked you to define a community forest, what would you say?

Please read the following information about community forests. There will be questions following the description.

The term community forest is often used loosely to apply to many different types of land projects. This report will use the following definition created by the Community Forest Collaborative (CFC)¹¹.

¹¹ The Community Forest Collaborative is a group comprised of The Trust for Public Land, the Northern Forest center, and the Quebec-Labrador Foundation/Atlantic Center for the Environment. Its goal is to “marshal resources to expand the community ownership and management of forestland.”
http://www.northernforest.org/Community_Forest_Collaborative.html

Definition: The Community Forest model secures access and rights to the forest resource at the community level; it promotes community participation in management decisions; it ensures that communities receive value and benefits from the land that can support and reinforce community priorities and economic development objectives; and it secures permanent protection of the conservation values of the forestland.”

This Community Forest Model has four main components:

- (1) Community forests are owned and managed by a municipal entity or by another group (e.g. land trust) on behalf of a community.
- (2) The proposed acquisition and management structure ensures community participation in and responsibility for management decisions.
- (3) The community has secure access to the value and benefits of the forest, both monetary and nonmonetary, that can support and reinforce community priorities and economic development objectives.
- (4) The conservation values of the forestland are permanently protected.

Were you familiar with the concept of a community forest before this description?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

Based on this description, would you like to see a local land trust help to establish a community forest?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

If so, what role would you like the land trust to play?

- ☐ Land trust should play no role.
- ☐ Land trust should assist towns or counties in acquiring land that will then be community forests.
- ☐ Land trusts should manage town or county owned land as a community forest.
- ☐ Land trusts should establish community forests on some properties that the land trust already owns.
- ☐ Land trusts should acquire new land with the intention of establishing a community forest
- ☐ Land trusts should hold a working forest conservation easement on a community forest owned by another entity,

○ Other: _____

If a Community Forest existed – what activates would you like to see on this land? Please check all that apply.

- Recreational - Hiking
- Recreational - Mountain Biking
- Recreational - Horseback Riding
- Recreational - Trail Running
- Economic - Sustainable Forestry (revenue from sustainable timber harvest go back to the community)
- Economic - Sustainable Agriculture (revenues from sustainable farming go back to the community)
- Economic - Firewood harvest of downed or unhealthy trees
- Economic - Pine straw raking
- Educational - Education for other forestland owners (property acts as a demonstration forest for sustainable forestry)
- Educational - Education to children about the benefits of land management and stewardship
- Educational - Education about traditional uses of land in the Southeast

Others:

Most community forests have a management committee made up by members of the community. The committee acts to represent the community as a whole and is responsible for many of the management decisions on the property.

Would you like committee members appointed by TLC or elected by the community?

- Appointed
- Elected
- Mix of appointed and elected
- Other: _____

What types of representatives from the community would you like to see on the committee?
(Some examples include government officials, natural resource professionals, foresters, youth, etc.)

Please discuss any suggestions, concerns or other thoughts you have regarding a land trust's involvement in community forestry.

What county do you live in?

- ☐ Durham
- ☐ Orange
- ☐ Johnston
- ☐ Lee
- ☐ Chatham
- ☐ Wake
- ☐ Other: _____

How would you classify the area you live?

- ☐ Urban
- ☐ Sub-urban
- ☐ Rural

Sex

- ☐ Male
- ☐ Female
- ☐ Other

Age

- ☐ 18-24
- ☐ 25-34
- ☐ 35-44
- ☐ 45-54
- ☐ 55-64
- ☐ 65+
- ☐ Under 18

Ethnicity

- ☐ Asian/Pacific Islander

- Indigenous
- African American/ Black
- Hispanic/ Latino
- White
- Other

What is the highest level of education you have completed?

- Less than High School
- High School/GED
- Some College
- Associate's Degree
- Bachelor's Degree
- Post Graduate / Professional Degrees